

ARGUMENTS/REMARKS

Claims 10, 12 and 14 through 19, 21 and 22 are presented for examination in the present application. Claims 10, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 21 have been amended. Claims 11, 13 and 20 have been canceled by the present amendment.

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter with respect to dependent claims 13 through 16. Independent claim 10 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of dependent claim 13 and the intervening claim.

In the Office Action, Claims 10, through 12 and 17 through 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,960,361 to Melzer (hereinafter "Melzer"). Rejections with regard to claims 11, 13, and 20 are now moot as those claims have been canceled by the present amendment.

Independent claim 10 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of dependent claim 13. Accordingly, claims 10, 12 and 14 through 16 are now allowable.

Independent claim 17 has been amended and provides for a device for processing a porous textile piece. Independent claim 17 includes

"a non-porous mask having a shape corresponding to at least a portion of the textile piece;

a pick-up head having a suction plate, said suction plate having a shape corresponding to said shape of said non-porous mask, wherein suction applied by said suction plate sandwiches the textile piece between said non-porous mask and said suction plate; and

a processing area for processing the textile piece while the textile piece is sandwiched between said non-porous mask and said suction plate"

Melzer discloses that "[a]s the structure, here denoted 3; is laid onto processing surface 5, the smaller sheet, here denoted 4; then drops, when the reduced pressure is switched off. (col. 2, lines 13-16)

Melzer does not disclose "a processing area for processing the textile piece while the textile is sandwiched between the non-porous mask and said suction plate", as required by claim 17.

In contrast, Melzer releases the structure 3 *and* the sheet 4 into processing surface 5, *and* sheet 4 drops into a basket. Melzer does not disclose a processing area for processing *while the textile is sandwiched between the non-porous mask and the plate*, because the lifting structure does not permit such function, as shown in Fig. 1.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for examination. Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and passage of this application to allowance.

If for any reason the Examiner feels that consultation with Applicants' attorney would be helpful in the advancement of the prosecution, the Examiner is invited to call the telephone number below for an interview.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles N. J. Ruggiero", written over a horizontal line.

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